







**"Celebrating 30 Years of Small Business Success"**



**December 8, 2014**

**In Today's Weekly Connection:**

-  **SBDC Network Planning Session**
-  **Spotlight on Success – Illinois SBDC ITC Satellite Opens in Naperville**
-  **Maximizing Neoserra – Managing Client Appointments**
-  **Valued Resources – Talent Pipeline Management**
-  **Network News and Moves – Deadline Extended - Call for Presentation Guidelines**
-  **America's SBDC Network Connect**

### **SBDC Network Planning Session**

Special thanks goes out to all the members of the Illinois SBDC Network who participated in our strategic planning session last week. Everyone was extremely engaged and focused on identifying goals and tactics to address our Network's pressing strategic issues with the aim at moving us forward toward our shared vision. Special thanks also goes out to Ken Klotz for doing an excellent job as our facilitator and to Mark Shevitz and Bob Musinski from CBD Marketing who guided us through an informative and enlightening session on messaging at the start of the meeting. We are compiling all of the input and feedback provided during the session and will be distributing more information out to the Network in the near future. Thanks again to everyone who made the session a tremendous success.

### **Spotlight on Success – Illinois SBDC ITC Satellite Opens in Naperville**

Posted on *dhbusinessledger.com* on 11/21/14 - The Illinois SBDC International Trade Center at Governors State University has opened a new satellite office in Naperville. The new ITC office at 2244 W. 95th St. is part of the working group of the White House Initiative on Asian American and Pacific Islanders, which promotes the expansion of U.S exports to the Asia Pacific market.

Hongxia "Mary" Ma, director of Illinois SBDC International Trade Center at GSU, recently hosted the ITC's opening event, which featured George Mui, senior advisor for the White House AAPI and market access team lead, MBDA, the U.S. Department of Commerce Washington D.C., and Theresa Mah, Ph.D., Senior Policy Advisor & Director of Asian American Outreach at Gov. Patrick Quinn's office.

Ma expressed appreciation for the support the White House and governor's office has given to ITC's efforts to increase U.S. exports.

"The newly launched ITC office will implement the AAPI initiative and promote the doing business in Asia," Ma said.

"Asian American residents account for 14.9 percent in Naperville, one of the highest percentages of Asians in Illinois," she added. "We are committed to providing more

incentive programs available from federal and state government and bilingual language services to support Asian American business communities.”

AAPBI businesses have created 2.8 million jobs and generated over \$507 billion in sales over the past decade, according to U.S. Census Bureau reports. It’s believed that leveraging their economic power will contribute to positive economic gains for the United States that will be mutually beneficial for business partners in the Asia-Pacific region.

The ITC is also part of the National Export Initiative, which has been highlighted by the Obama administration as a priority for the renewal and revitalization of efforts to promote American products in the global market.

The center is funded by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity and the SBA. Ma said it is anticipated the new ITC office will generate more export promotion programs and international business opportunities for U.S. companies.

As an ITC Director, Ma leads efforts to increase U.S. exports from small to mid-size companies. The center provides high-impact and technical assistance export services, including free one-on-one business counseling, marketing research, logistics and export finances assistance.

Ma received the Governor’s Export Award in 2013 and was invited to participate the Asia Pacific Economic Forum at the White House in 2013 and 2014. She was one of only 100 business leaders in the nation who were invited to the White House events. She was chosen to attend these events for her work and commitment to the Asian American business community.

Learn more about the International Trade Center at GSU at <http://www.govst.edu/ITC/> or call 708.534.6976.

### **Maximizing Neoserra – Managing Client Appointments**

Neoserra has a calendar feature that allows you to manage all your client appointments, made from Neoserra. The Neoserra calendar can be integrated with your default calendar such as your Microsoft Outlook calendar or your Google calendar. [Learn details at: http://support.outreachsystems.com/resources/help/neoserra/faq.jsp?id=n233](http://support.outreachsystems.com/resources/help/neoserra/faq.jsp?id=n233)

**Special Reminder:** Entry into Neoserra will close at COB on Wednesday, December 10, 2014. It is very important that you input all relative data as we move toward the last month of the annual reporting year and the end of the 2015 center agreement cycle.

### **Valued Resources - Talent Pipeline Management**

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) released a Request for Application (RFA) seeking projects that connect talent strategies with business strategies. This is the logical next step as we expand the implementation of the Illinois Pathways model and is based on the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation call to action, "Managing the Talent Pipeline: A New Approach to Closing the Skills Gap."

As the economic and workforce development agency in Illinois, DCEO is a national leader in developing employer driven training solutions that meet the needs of businesses and job seekers. Through our Office of Employment and Training, DCEO leverages Workforce Investment Act (WIA) dollars to fund solutions not only for businesses, but also for local workforce areas, industry associations, economic development entities, and community colleges to create sector-based models and develop career pathways for job seekers including the long-term unemployed, veterans, people with disabilities and disadvantaged

youth.

Applications for this statewide program are due on January 30, 2015. Funding decisions will occur in the spring. On December 18, 2014, there will be an informational webinar from 1:00 p.m. until 3:00 p.m. to discuss the RFA. Webinar registration is required. The complete program guidelines are available from this page.

<http://www2.illinoisworknet.com/partners/Pages/iltalent.aspx>

### **Network News and Moves – Deadline Extended - America's SBDC Call for Presentation Guidelines**

America's SBDC annual conference is the professional development event for the entire SBDC Network, providing our consultants, advisors, state directors, regional directors, associate state directors, and associate regional directors, the latest information and techniques to enhance their skills, improve their training programs, or increase center metrics and productivity. America's SBDC national conference will be held September 8-11, 2015 at the San Francisco Marriott Marquis, in beautiful San Francisco, California.

America's SBDC Professional Development and Education Conference Committee seeks proposals for 1.5 hour, 3-hour (half day), and 6-hour (full day) programs. Though the conference draws over 1500 professionals from across the country, the number of participants per program could range 35-150 people.

**For professional paid speakers we have a small budget and we will negotiate cost, travel fees, room rates, and other amenities as a part of your compensation.**

**All SBDC Presenters: If selected, must register for the conference and will be provided a reduced conference fee.**

All Proposals should include a presentation (slide deck) and handouts. Updates to submissions are permitted prior to review by the Conference Committee, and if selected, presentations can be updated prior to conference as well. The sessions selected should enhance the quality of SBDC services and provide the SBDC/SBTDC Network practical information to either assist small businesses or their centers. Criteria for selection include: quality of the proposal, clarity and organization, creativity and/or delivery method, ability to deliver in prescribed time frame, and fit to the professional development needs of the SBDC.

Submissions should include title, brief description (less than 60 words), program outline or agenda, and program learning objectives. All proposals are submitted through America's SBDC Conference portal found on the America's SBDC Conference webpage, [www.AmericasSBDC.org/conference](http://www.AmericasSBDC.org/conference), click on the link for [workshop submissions](#).

Returning submitters may use the same login and password, while those posting submissions for first time will be required to set up user login and password.

**HAPPY HOLIDAYS! The submission deadline has been extended to January 11th 2015.**

Four key areas of education include:

- 1) advisor core competencies
- 2) advanced consultant' skills

3) center management

4) senior leadership at the associate and/or state director level.

Topics in marketing and sales, counseling and leadership, management and planning, finance and accounting, technology, self-improvement, and international trade may be submitted for consideration. A more complete list of subjects and guidelines may be found at [www.AmericasSBDC.org/conference](http://www.AmericasSBDC.org/conference)

Key Note speakers are normally reserved for our sponsors; however if you wish to submit a proposal as a keynote speaker please email [Brett Thibodeau](mailto:Brett.Thibodeau@americasbdc.org) or [Karen Shannon](mailto:Karen.Shannon@americasbdc.org) with your request and a brief description of your topic. All workshop proposal questions should be referred to [Brett Thibodeau](mailto:Brett.Thibodeau@americasbdc.org), 703/764-9850.

A sample proposal format is included in the [Call For Papers Guidelines](#). We recommend you print the guidelines to help you coordinate your proposal for online submission.

We look forward to seeing you in September, 2015 at America's SBDC annual conference.

### **America's SBDC Network Connect**

Please [CLICK HERE](#) to see the December 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the [America's SBDC Network Connect Newsletter](#). Please note that the America's SBDC Network Connect newsletter will have a new look in 2015 and it will also move from a weekly to bi-weekly publication. Also please note there will be no newsletter the weeks of December 22nd and January 2nd.

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The **WEEKLY CONNECTION** is distributed by the Illinois SBDC and DCEO Office of Entrepreneurship, Innovation & Technology each Monday to members of the DCEO Illinois SBDC Network to provide the service delivery partners with regular updates on small business issues, opportunities and resources. You may send any information to share with the Illinois SBDC Network to [Tom.Becker@illinois.gov](mailto:Tom.Becker@illinois.gov). Please feel free to forward this update to other interested resource providers and key stakeholders.

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